



UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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## **Secretary LaHood Applauds Kentucky and Nebraska Bans on Texting for All Drivers**

WASHINGTON – U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood today applauded Kentucky Governor Steve Beshear and Nebraska Governor Dave Heineman for signing anti-texting-while-driving bills into law for all drivers in their states. In Kentucky, the new law also prohibits drivers under 18 from using cell phones behind the wheel at any time. In Nebraska, state law already forbids teen drivers with provisional licenses, learner's permits or school permits from texting or talking on cell phones.

"The streets in Kentucky and Nebraska will be safer with these laws on the books," said Secretary LaHood. "Distracted driving is an epidemic that kills thousands and injures hundreds of thousands more every year. Drivers should always devote their full attention to the road, not to texting and talking on a cell phone."

Earlier this week, Nebraska became the 22nd state to ban texting for all drivers. Under the ban, texting while driving is a secondary offense which allows law enforcement officials to ticket drivers if they are pulled over for another offense.

Kentucky is the 23rd state to ban texting for all drivers. The new law prohibits texting while driving for drivers of all ages, except in the case of an emergency. The law is stricter for drivers under 18, who may not text or talk on cell phones behind the wheel.

NHTSA has developed sample legislation that states can use as a starting point to craft measures to ban texting. The sample bill is patterned after President Obama's October 1, 2009, Executive Order prohibiting federal employees from texting while operating government-owned vehicles and equipment. Last year, more than 200 distracted driving bills were under consideration by state legislatures, and the pace is expected to increase this year.

Research compiled by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration attributed an estimated 6,000 deaths and half-a-million injuries to distracted driving in 2008 alone. Last week, Secretary LaHood launched pilot programs in New York and Connecticut as part of a "*Phone in One Hand. Ticket in the Other.*" campaign to study whether increased enforcement and public awareness can reduce distracted driving behavior.

For more information on distracted driving and the Department of Transportation's work, visit [www.distraction.gov](http://www.distraction.gov).

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